

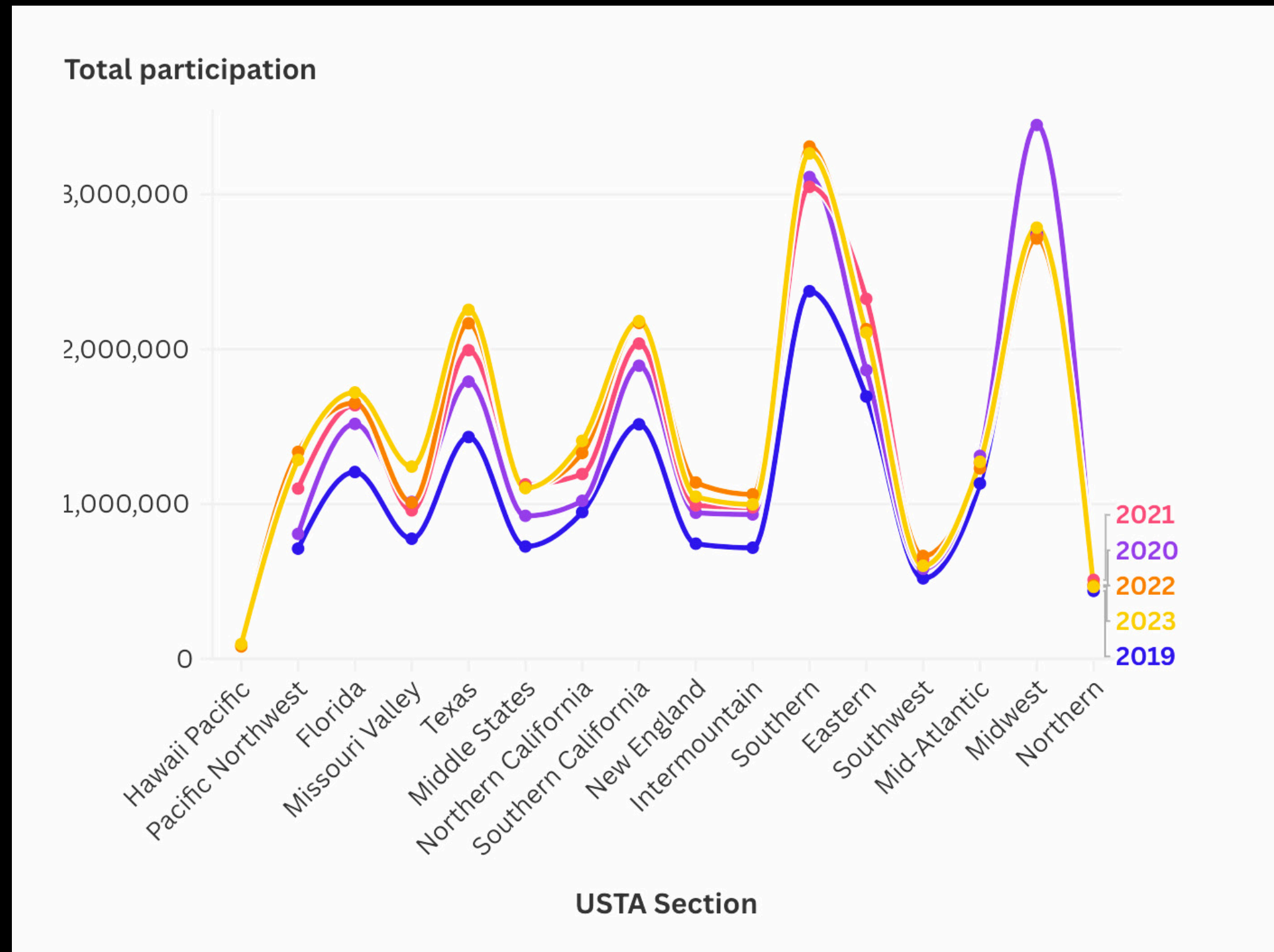
# ***HOW TO DRIVE GROWTH IN TENNIS PARTICIPATION***

**» BRYNNA BURNETT AND ELLEN MASON**

# THE ISSUE

## ➤ TENNIS PARTICIPATION IS NOT EXPERIENCING SUBSTANTIAL ANNUAL GROWTH

Unlike extremely popular sports in the U.S. such as pickleball, which has grown over 200% over the past three years, Tennis is not experiencing substantial annual growth.





# ***THE EFFECTS:***

## **➤ TENNIS COULD LOSE A NEW GENERATION OF PLAYERS AND FANS**

If tennis does not revitalize its brand, it could lose a generation of players and fans that are already participating in team sports less each year.





"In terms of innovation in our sport... other than Slams, we have to figure out how to attract a young audience. Tennis on one hand is in a good place, but at the same time, when we look at Formula 1 for example and what they've done in terms of marketing, in terms of growth of the sport, in terms of the races around the world and how popular they are.. I think we need to do a better job on our respective tours. The grand slams are always gonna do well. But I think our tours need to do better. We are lucky to be very historic and a very global sport. But I think one of the studies that was done by PTPA 3 or 4 years ago showed that tennis is the 3rd or 4th most watched sport in the world along with cricket. Number 1 is football or soccer as you call it in the states. Second is basketball. Then it's tennis and cricket. But tennis is number 9 or 10 on the list of all sports in terms of using its popularity, commercializing or capitalizing on that. I think there's a huge space for growth. We're quite fractioned as a sport. There are quite a bit of things for us to collectively look at and try to improve it...Tennis is a very global sport and it's loved by millions of children that pick up a racquet that wanna play, but we don't make it accessible. We don't make it so affordable."

➤ **NOVAK DJOKOVIC**





# ***WHAT IS HINDERING TENNIS FROM SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH?***



# **TENNIS HAS A BRANDING PROBLEM**

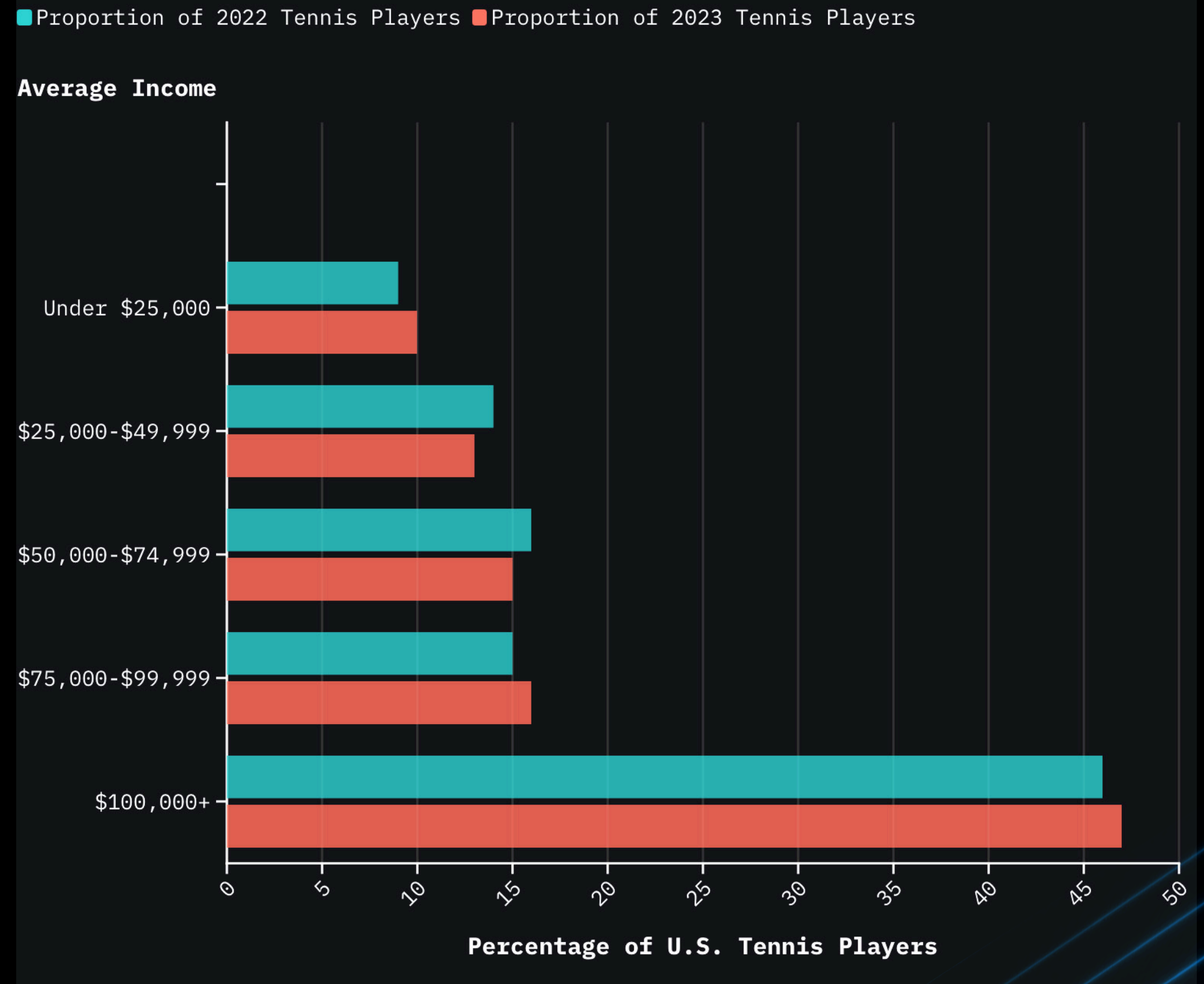
## **> SOCIAL LISTENING**

- "My brother played when he was in high school. I always found it really boring. My attention span could not pay attention to a game like that." - KU Student Eris Rindt (non-tennis player)
- Charlotte Mcnealy, KU Student, plays tennis but says she has not watched any live tennis since the 2024 U.S. Open. There have been a combined total of 21 televised ATP and WTA tournaments since the U.S. Open.
- "It's super expensive to learn tennis, which is why people say it's a rich white people sport. Then even to watch it on TV, you need like five different subscriptions. I've never been to a live tournament but I've looked at tickets and that's not cheap either." - Response to a Reddit discussion titled "What do you hate about tennis?"



# DATA INSIGHT #1:

➤ Tennis is an inaccessible sport with most players having an income over \$100,000.

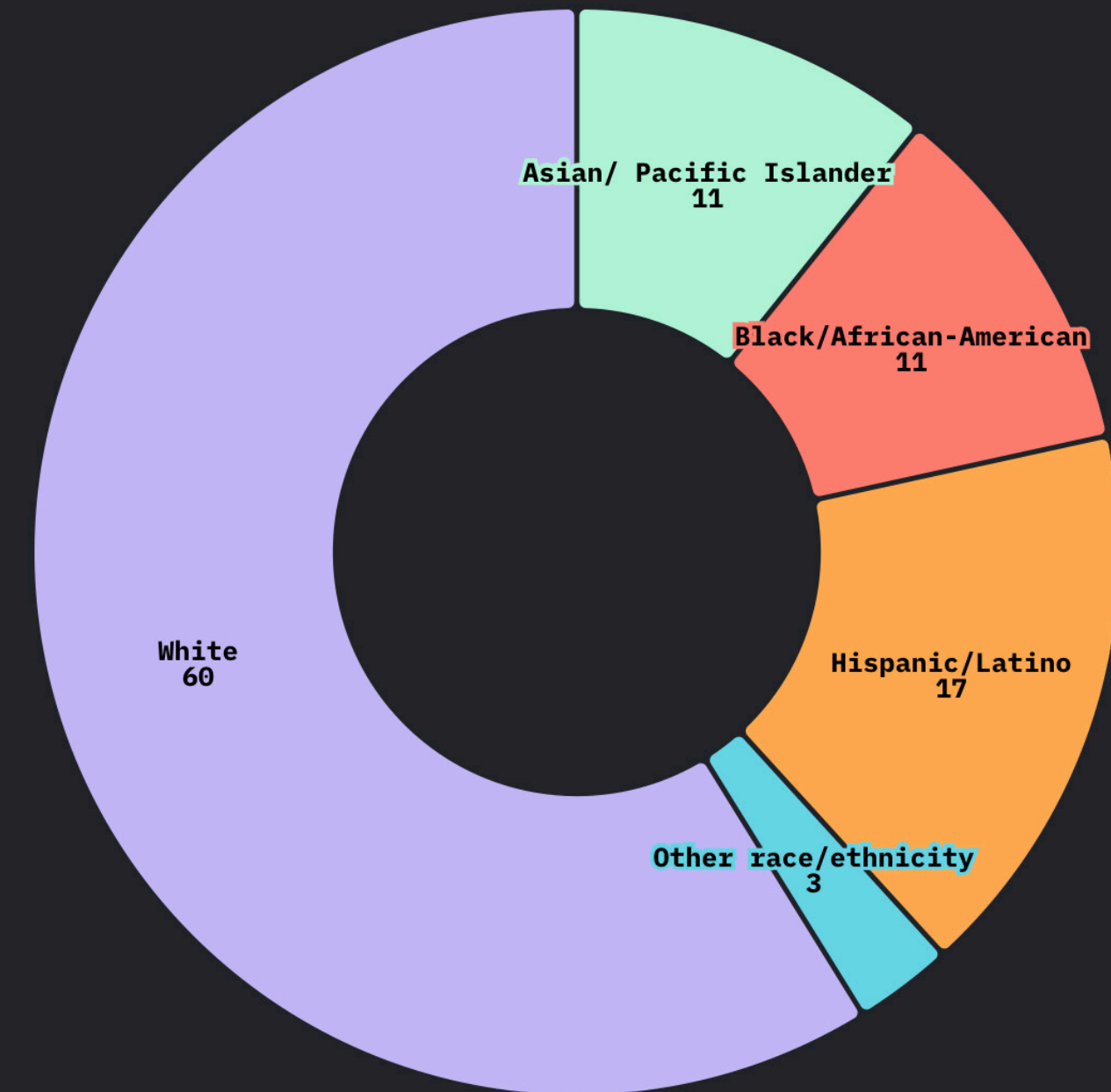




# DATA INSIGHT #2:

> TENNIS LACKS DIVERSITY

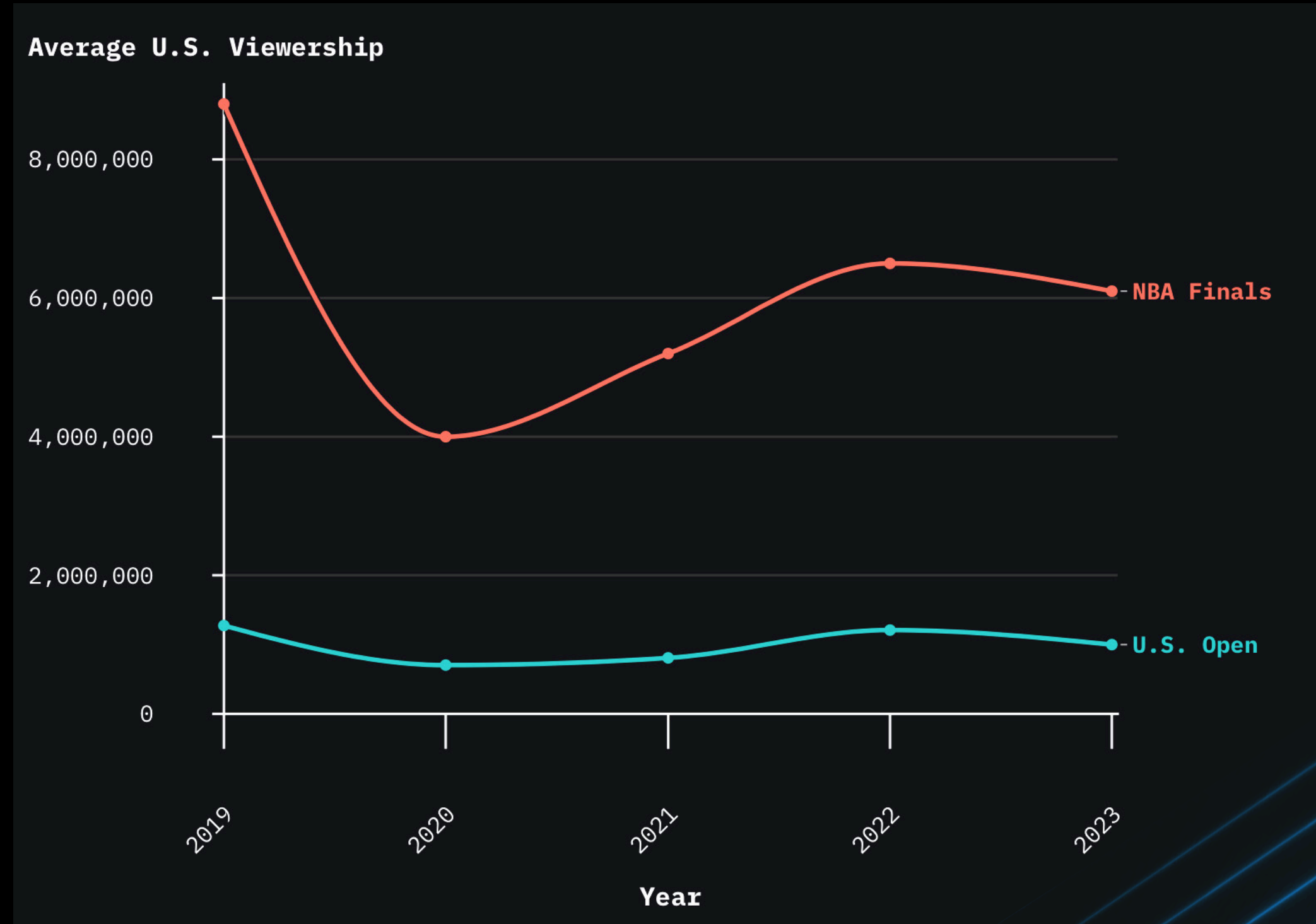
Race/Ethnicity of Tennis Players in 2023





# DATA INSIGHT #3:

➤ Tennis viewership is not nearly as high as other popular sports in the U.S.



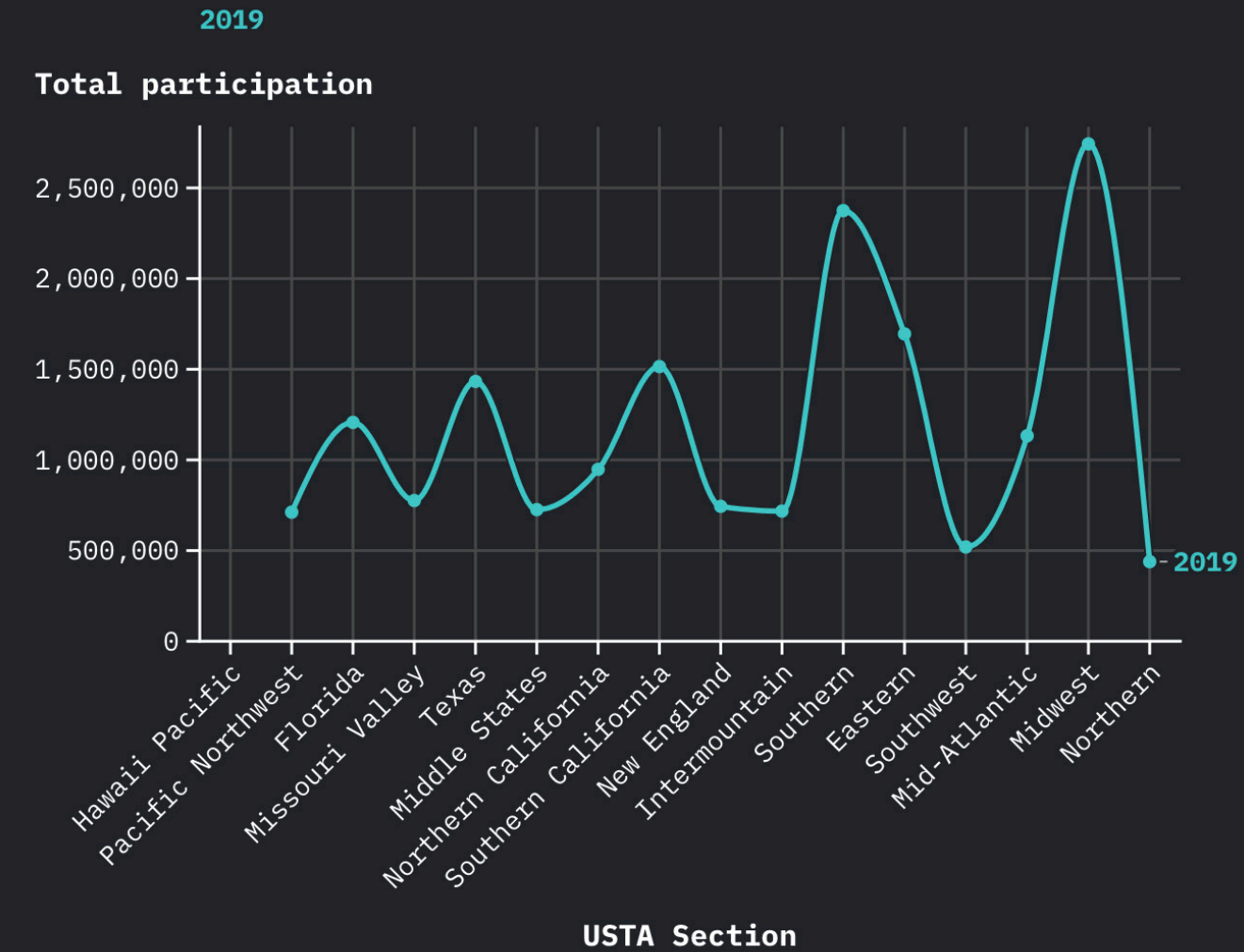


# DATA INSIGHT #4:

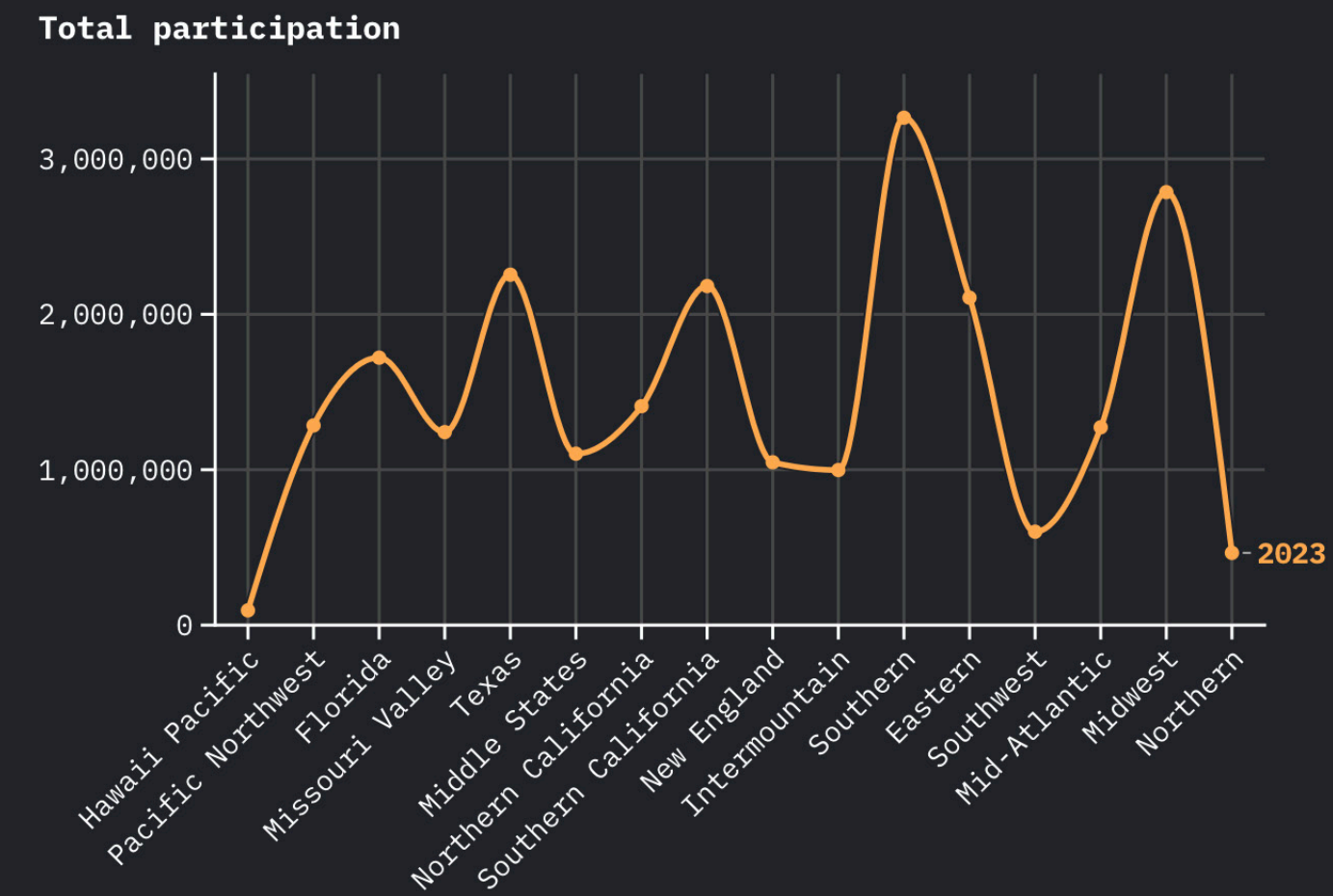
## > Failure to see growth potential in Southern and Midwest sections.

The Midwest USTA section is one of the largest tennis markets in the U.S. with 2.78 million participants, but its average annual growth rate is only 2%, indicating potential for enhanced outreach and engagement.

2019



2023





# ***RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GROWTH:***



# RECOMMENDATION #1

## ➤ INTRODUCE BRANDING AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF OTHER POPULAR SPORTS TO TENNIS.

- Accessibility
- Community





# ***RECOMMENDATION #2:***

- **Market to a young, American audience across multiple platforms:**
  - Advertisement spots during tennis programming of brands that appeal to a younger, more diverse audience.
  - Increase visibility of professional players with a wider range of brand partnerships.





# ***RECOMMENDATION #3:***

➤ Create community outreach programs that encourage tennis participation in diverse regions and communities.

- Free youth tennis camps in low-income neighborhoods
- Tennis classes at local recreation centers.
- Sponsored court revitalization projects in low-income neighborhoods





***Access the script for this  
presentation here.***